



United States Attorney's Office
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PRESS RELEASE

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Judge Sentences Two Southeast Men For the Kidnaping and Murder of Senica Bennett on September 20, 2007

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Jerrell A. Haskel was sentenced on Friday, June 4, 2010, by the Honorable Gerald I. Fisher in the Superior Court of Washington, D.C., to over 17 years of incarceration on the charge of Second Degree Murder While Armed, and Dale R. Eccleston was sentenced by the same judge to 4 years of incarceration for the crime of Kidnaping, announced U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. today. Both defendants were sentenced in connection with their involvement in the murder of Senica Bennett on September 20, 2007. Both Haskell and Eccleston had previously pled guilty on February 5, 2010.

According to evidence introduced at the plea hearing, on September 20, 2007, Haskel and Eccleston saw the victim, Senica Bennett, walking near 5124 Hanna Place, S.E., in Washington, D.C. Both Eccleston and Haskel were angry at Mr. Bennett because they believed – incorrectly – that he had improperly touched one of Eccleston's younger sisters a few weeks earlier. Eccleston and Haskel proceeded to assault the victim, pushing and punching him, and then Eccleston grabbed Mr. Bennett and walked him against his will into a wooded area in the rear of 5124 Hanna Place S.E. Once they arrived at this more secluded location, Haskel pulled out a gun and ordered Mr. Bennett to turn around. Once Mr. Bennett complied, Haskel shot Mr. Bennett once in the back of the head. Mr. Bennett was a particularly vulnerable victim. Although he was 30 years old, he had the mental functional level of a very young child. Both Haskel and Eccleston knew Mr. Bennett's limitations.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Machen commended Metropolitan Police Department Detectives Robert Arrington and Dwayne Partman, who handled the investigation of this murder. He also commended the work of Marcey Rinker, victim/witness advocate, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jocelyn Ballantine and Fernando Campoamor, who handled the investigation and prosecution of the case.